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New York

President:	Mr. Alotaibi	(Kuwait)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Solíz
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
	Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Netherlands	Mrs. Gregoire Van Haaren
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Ms. Coleman

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Sixth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2018/80)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Sixth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2018/80)

The President: In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2018/80, which contains the sixth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering that threat.

I now give the floor to Mr. Voronkov.

Mr. Voronkov: On behalf of the Secretary-General, I would like to start by expressing my solidarity with the people and Governments in areas where there have been recent terror attacks. The list is long and includes Afghanistan, Cameroon, Iraq, Nigeria, the Philippines and Somalia. Our prayers are with the victims and survivors of those heinous attacks. I also call on all Member States to redouble their efforts to strengthen international cooperation in order to address terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism and to bring those responsible for terrorist acts to justice.

Thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the sixth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering that threat (S/2018/80). The report was prepared with the input of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, and in close collaboration with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and other United Nations entities and international organizations.

The fight against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) is entering a new phase. The Secretary-General's sixth report shows that despite the significant military setbacks that ISIL experienced in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and the southern Philippines last year, the group and its affiliates continue to pose a significant and evolving threat around the world. The report states that ISIL is no longer focused on conquering and holding territory. It has been forced to adapt and focus primarily on smaller and more motivated groups of individuals who remain committed to inspiring, enabling and carrying out attacks. It is now organized as a global network with a flat hierarchy and less operational control over its affiliates.

Although it is difficult to assess with confidence the number of foreign terrorist fighters who remain in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, the flow of fighters to both countries has nearly come to a halt. However, returning foreign terrorist fighters, and those who relocate to other regions, continue to present a considerable threat to international security. The report indicates that the structure of ISIL's global propaganda machinery, and the quantity and quality of its output, continue to deteriorate. However, ISIL members and sympathizers are still able to use social media, including encryption technology and communication tools within the dark web, to communicate, coordinate and facilitate attacks.

ISIL's ability to generate revenue has been considerably weakened, largely owing to its loss of control over oil and gas fields in the Syrian Arab Republic. Its revenues have fallen by more than 90 per cent since 2015. However, it is still able to generate income through extortion and the control of checkpoints. One of our key concerns is how to enable much-needed reconstruction and stabilization funds to flow into areas liberated from ISIL while preventing them from ending up in ISIL's hands. ISIL continues to fund its affiliates, who are increasingly looking for ways to diversify their income and become financially independent. Money services, including exchange

houses and money couriers, continue to be a preferred method for ISIL and its supporters to move funds across borders. With regard to ISIL's evolving threat outside Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, its affiliates in Egypt have shown considerable resilience and pose a growing threat. ISIL remains determined to rebuild its capabilities in Libya, and continues to carry out sporadic attacks.

In West Africa, ISIL-related groups continue to operate in Mali and its neighbours. In East Africa, ISIL affiliates operating in Puntland and southern Somalia complicate the threat posed by Al-Qaida's affiliate Al-Shabaab. Despite having been further degraded by Afghan and international military operations, ISIL continues to mount aggressive attacks in Afghanistan, especially in Kabul. ISIL affiliates have suffered significant setbacks in South-East Asia, notably the loss of the city of Marawi in the southern Philippines.

The rapidly evolving and transnational threat posed by ISIL presents a difficult challenge for Member States and the international community and underlines the vital importance of sharing information on the identity of returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters. The ISIL and Al-Qaida sanctions list remains one of the key global instruments in that regard. I welcome the Council's efforts in recent months to adopt several resolutions to help counter terrorist narratives, prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons, address the issue of accountability for crimes committed by ISIL in Iraq, disrupt human trafficking carried out by terrorist groups and address the issue of foreign terrorist fighters through measures on border security, information-sharing and criminal justice. The focus should now be on implementing those new global norms.

Member States, the United Nations and international, regional and subregional organizations continue to strengthen the existing tools while also developing new ones to address the evolving threat posed by ISIL. Innovative partnerships between Government agencies and private-sector actors have strengthened the sharing of sensitive information on terrorism financing patterns and suspect individuals. Many Member States are paying increasing attention to prosecution strategies and rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.

The United Nations capacity-building implementation plan for countering the flow of foreign terrorist fighters continues to evolve to address the full life cycle of fighters — 35 of the 50 projects in the plan have either been completed or are being implemented. However, this is no time for complacency. We need to stay one step ahead of ISIL as it continues to adapt and evolve. I would like to make four concluding observations.

First, we already have a strong international framework for countering the threat from ISIL through the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, various General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, 19 international counter-terrorism conventions and many regional instruments. The international effort to combat ISIL would be greatly enhanced by effective implementation of those existing resolutions and legal counter-terrorism instruments, conventions and protocols. The United Nations stands ready to provide assistance to Member States in that regard when needed.

Secondly, the international community should address the deficit in counter-terrorism cooperation at the global, regional and national levels. In June, the Secretary-General will convene the first-ever United Nations summit of heads of counter-terrorism agencies of Member States, with the aim of enhancing cooperation and the timely and secure exchange of information, and developing new, innovative ways to tackle terrorism.

Thirdly, addressing the threat posed by ISIL requires addressing the underlying conditions that cause young men and women to be lured by violent extremism. Most new recruits to terrorist organizations are between 17 and 27 years old. Extremist groups exploit feelings of disillusionment and alienation, offering a twisted sense of purpose to disaffected young people. The summit will therefore also discuss how to engage and empower young people to help prevent violent extremism.

Fourthly, this is the first report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL since the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism. Last week, the Secretary-General approved the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, which will help deliver one of the key priorities, that is, strengthening the coordination and coherence of the counter-terrorism efforts of the United Nations system. We are committed to stepping up our capacity-building support to all Member States to enhance the implementation of the United Nations

Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant Security Council resolutions.

The fight against ISIL and its affiliates is far from over. While there have been significant military successes over the past eight months, this remains a genuine global challenge that demands an urgent and concerted multilateral response. The Secretary-General welcomes the focus that the Security Council has put on the matter, and urges it to continue its efforts to further enhance multilateral cooperation to address the threats and challenges set out in the report.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Voronkov for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

Ms. Coleman (United States of America): I thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov for his briefing, especially because it is his first briefing on this threat since the Office of Counter-Terrorism was established last year. The United States looks forward to its continued cooperation with him and his team to help Member States fight terrorism.

The maps of the territory occupied by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) in Iraq and Syria tell a powerful story. In 2013 and 2014 ISIS was on the march. It had seized large portions of Syria and Iraq for its self-proclaimed caliphate of terror. Some of the region's largest cities, such as Mosul, had fallen to ISIS. Those terrorists committed unspeakable human rights abuses against the people of Iraq and Syria in the areas ISIS controlled, while they used their safe haven to plan attacks around the world.

Today, in 2018, the maps tell a different story. The territory ISIS controls has collapsed. Iraq has been liberated from ISIS. The United States led a decisive coalition of Member States that helped to significantly weaken ISIS, together with partners across Syria and Iraq. Our resolve for an enduring defeat of ISIS will not falter. We will continue the fight until the maps no longer show ISIS territory at all.

But even then our work will not be done. That is because ISIS is adapting its tactics. ISIS is losing its so-called State, but its remaining fighters will try to undermine stabilization and reconstruction in Iraq and Syria. ISIS foreign terrorist fighters will also try to return to their homes and take their fight to new fronts. Together with Al-Qaida, ISIS cells and affiliates present a grave threat that the spread of terror will be expanded to communities around the world.

We see those despicable attacks happening already. Just a few weeks ago, ISIS claimed responsibility for a cowardly attack in Afghanistan against Save the Children, a humanitarian non-governmental organization that helps more than 700,000 Afghan children. Last fall in Egypt, ISIS claimed responsibility for a despicable attack against a mosque that reportedly killed more than 300 people, in the middle of prayers.

Even as we roll back ISIS on its core territory, the need for all of us to be vigilant and to work together to defeat this evil is obvious. As the fight against ISIS enters a new phase, much of the work will fall to our dedicated law enforcement and intelligence professionals, who will need to pool their resources and information to stop attacks from happening in the first place. There is no time to waste in looking for ways to deepen our cooperation on that front. We have introduced vital tools here at United Nations that can help such efforts.

First of all, Member States must step up their efforts to crack down on the sources of financing for ISIS and Al-Qaida. In the coming months, we fully expect that ISIS will try to infiltrate legitimate businesses in Iraq and Syria to look for new ways to raise money. All Member States have an obligation to freeze the assets of all terrorists on the list of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999), concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities, including those of ISIS and Al-Qaida. Member States must take that obligation seriously and implement their obligations comprehensively. The United States will exercise maximum vigilance to locate and disrupt the funding networks for ISIS and Al-Qaida.

We must all enhance our efforts to disrupt the flow of foreign terrorist fighters across borders. They constantly look for ways to break our defences and evade capture. That is why resolution 2396 (2017), which we adopted in December, is so important. It includes crucial measures aimed at strengthening border security and information-sharing, as well as provisions to improve judicial and law enforcement cooperation. Resolution 2396 (2017) sets high standards for how States should improve their border-control tools. It also strongly encourages Governments to develop prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies, alongside civil society, to help break the cycle of terrorism. The

United States urges all Member States to implement their obligations under this resolution as soon as possible, and United Nations counter-terrorism bodies to be prepared to assist Member States in that task.

There should be no doubt about the need to use all the tools we have established under the Security Council to fight ISIS. To that list we should also add resolution 2379 (2017), which established an investigative mechanism to document crimes committed by ISIS in Iraq. Accountability for atrocities committed by ISIS is a crucial part of recovering from the group's reign of terror. The final deadline for agreeing to the terms of reference for the ISIS investigative mechanism is coming up tomorrow. We hope that Iraq and the United Nations can reach agreement so that the resolution can be fully and rapidly implemented.

The United States is proud of our steadfast effort to stand up to ISIS and rally a global response to defeat the threat. It is true that the threat posed by ISIS is adapting in new and dangerous ways. When we look back at what our campaign has achieved so far, we should use that success to strengthen our resolve for this new chapter. When we all looked at those maps of ISIS expanding in 2014, it was hard to imagine that three years later we would see such a dramatic change for the better. Through the strength of our collective will, we have turned the tide. We will do the same in the years to come until ISIS is defeated for good and consigned to the dustbin of history, where it belongs.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): Let me first warmly thank Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov, who is leading our counter-terrorism efforts, for his very illuminating briefing on the sixth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by Da'esh (S/2018/80).

As the report underscores, Da'esh has suffered major military defeats in the Levant over the past six months, owing in particular to the efforts of the international coalition. Although the group has lost its territorial anchorage, the fight against Da'esh in Syria and in Iraq is not over. We must therefore continue our efforts, including on the military front, to prevent the emergence of safe havens, especially in Libya, West Africa, Afghanistan and South-East Asia. But above and beyond our necessary military efforts, I would like to underscore four areas for action that France considers to be priorities, which broadly meet those outlined by Mr. Voronkov.

First, changes in the flows of foreign terrorist fighters should prompt us to constantly adapt our legislation and plans. Beyond the need to continue to prevent radicalization and block departures, we must anticipate the risks posed by potential returnees and by fighters who decide to travel to a third State. That requires that we improve our detection tools and strengthen information-sharing, especially with INTERPOL. We must also design appropriate legal responses. It is an exceedingly complex undertaking, given the diversity of the people involved, and, in the case of France, the large number of women and children.

With regard to the last point, France attaches great importance to specific care for children. The adoption of resolution 2396 (2017) in December is an important milestone in that regard, as it requests that Member States redouble their efforts and adopt additional measures to address the flow of foreign terrorist fighters.

Secondly, combating the financing of terrorism must remain an absolute priority. As we have sadly witnessed, little money is required to kill indiscriminately in the streets of Paris, New York, Bamako, Kabul or Baghdad. But it takes significant resources to lead a terrorist organization, establish its networks, disseminate its hate narratives and maintain its fighters, while also purchasing their weapons and sometimes even their allegiance.

Significant work has been carried out over the past 20 years to dry up terrorists' resources, in the United Nations and other entities, such as the Financial Action Task Force. But terrorist groups have proved their resiliency and resourcefulness in raising and transferring their respective financial resources and, as we are aware, have used a wide range of options, including common and online crime, organized fraud, kidnapping, extortion and trafficking in arms and narcotics, to list just a few.

Although we have secured results by freezing terrorists' assets, controlling official and unofficial financial flows and maintaining the integrity of the financial system, all the techniques for transferring money are vulnerable. Our work in that regard must not falter, and that has led the President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, to convene an international conference on the financing of terrorism, to be held on 26 April in Paris, to facilitate the needed

sharing of expertise and to call for renewed political commitment in the area.

Concerning our third priority, we must continue to counter the spread of this barbaric ideology, in particular on the Internet. While confronting terrorists who use digitization to their advantage, we must also adapt our means of reacting, in full respect for human rights and basic freedoms. Combating Da'esh on the Internet is a new frontier in our struggle. The Internet must not become the last refuge for Da'esh following the fall of its strongholds on the ground.

At President Macron's initiative, France is at the forefront of the struggle, seeking to lead a frank discussion with the major Internet companies on ways to counter Da'esh's deadly propaganda. At the United Nations, in September 2017, we co-hosted a high-level event on the sidelines of the General Assembly, together with Italy and the United Kingdom, as well as with companies from the private sector. In the framework of the Group of Seven, the Interior Ministers adopted a strongly worded joint communiqué in Ischia in October 2017, which recalls the need to fight with resolve the use of the Internet for terrorist ends. In the framework of the European Union, France is actively supporting the work initiated by the European Commission in the framework of the European Union Internet Forum, which is leading a dialogue with the major digital technology companies.

As evidenced by the establishment of the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism in the summer of 2017, the private sector has grasped the stakes involved, but we must do more and better. Beyond the needed commitment of Government stakeholders and Internet companies, the effectiveness of our action also depends on the mobilization of civil society in terms of counter-narratives so as to expose the contradictions of terrorist groups. Civil society efforts must be encouraged and supported. France is committed to continuing its work to combat the use of the Internet for terrorist ends, which is a major pillar in combating Da'esh.

Lastly, and our fourth priority, there cannot be an effective and sustainable fight against Da'esh without a fight against impunity for the crimes that it has committed. Too many civilians, including women and children, have been victims of crimes that, in addition to constituting acts of terrorism, may well constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity. Justice must be part of the response to that scourge. That is why France supported the establishment of the Independent International Mechanism of Inquiry on crimes committed in Syria, which also applies to crimes committed by Da'esh, and the Security Council's establishment of the international Investigative Team for crimes committed by Da'esh in Iraq. France promotes investigative efforts and prosecutions conducted in accordance with the rule of law and human rights, and recalls, in that regard, its steadfast opposition to the death penalty wherever and no matter the circumstances.

In conclusion, I will emphasize the unique role that the United Nations must continue to play in the multifront struggle that we are waging against terrorism, in particular against Da'esh. With the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999), concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Office of Counter-Terrorism, the United Nations now has all the tools it requires to analyse threats, assess the implementation of Security Council resolutions, identify the priority needs of States and provide them with appropriate technical assistance. France reiterates its full support for United Nations entities in their work and will fully engage in the sixth United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy review next June to ensure that our collective response remain commensurate to the threat.

Mr. Hickey (United Kingdom): I thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov for his briefing and presentation of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/80).

Since 2014, Da'esh has lost 98 per cent of its territory, and the global coalition has liberated more than 7.7 million people from its rule in Iraq and Syria. The United Kingdom is proud of the role that it has played in conducting more than 1,600 air strikes in Iraq and Syria, training more than 60,000 members of the Iraqi security forces and supporting counter-Da'esh operations, with approximately 1,400 United Kingdom personnel in the region. In addition to winning the war, we are working to win the peace by supporting stabilization and the humanitarian response. The United Kingdom has committed $3.4 billion to the Syrian crisis since 2012. In Iraq, we have committed $320 million in humanitarian aid, $418 million in loan guarantees through the World Bank to support

fiscal stability and economic development, and nearly $35 million to support stabilization.

However, we cannot afford to be complacent. As the Secretary-General's report highlights, Da'esh has been weakened and fragmented, but around the world we continue to face a grave threat from individuals and cells affiliated with, or inspired by, Da'esh. The continued threat of terrorism is unfortunately something that we have felt personally in the United Kingdom. As we think of the victims of terrorism around the world, we must redouble our efforts to defeat Da'esh for good.

First, we must continue and step up our efforts to tackle terrorist misuse of the Internet. We are already making strides in that fight online. The event last September led by Prime Minister Theresa May, together with President Macron and Prime Minister Gentiloni Silveri, was a landmark achievement in bringing States and industry together to tackle the threat. The output of Da'esh propaganda has fallen by more than half since its peak, and sympathizer accounts are being taken down faster than ever before. The United Kingdom's first-of-its-kind terrorist-content referral unit has worked with technology companies to take down over 300,000 posts.

But we need to do much more to ensure that we have the tools and technology to remain ahead of the terrorists. Building on the establishment of the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism, we are seeking to encourage technology companies to take the initiative in tackling terrorist content uploaded to the Internet. We need to ensure that terrorist content is taken down rapidly and limited in its circulation, and to prevent it from being made available in the first place. Larger companies need to support and spread best practices to smaller companies.

Secondly, we must strengthen our collective ability to counter the threat of returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters, which was rightly highlighted by the Secretary-General's report and is a focus of resolution 2396 (2017). We are encouraged that more than 60 countries are now working to build on INTERPOL's global database currently tracking 43,000 fighters, but there is more that States around the globe must do to strengthen border security, including work on advanced passenger information, passenger name records and biometrics. We must also do more work on developing effective prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies, while paying special attention to the particular challenges posed by women and children returnees.

Thirdly, the United Kingdom remains committed to enhancing aviation security to counter terrorism, building on the Council's resolution 2309 (2016). To do that, the United Kingdom is investing in the development of new technology as well as working with partners around the world. We also welcome the agreement last October on the Global Aviation Security Plan of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and we call on ICAO and all States to ensure that the plan is fully implemented.

Finally, I want to reiterate the United Kingdom's support for the Secretary-General's reform of the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture and for the Office of Count-Terrorism (OCT) under the leadership of Under-Secretary-General Voronkov. We welcome the initial steps taken to enhance coherence within the United Nations system, especially the commitment to work closely with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and Executive Director Coninsx. We look forward to OCT developing greater ability to support States, in particular in areas where the United Nations can add unique value, such as in the prevention of violent extremism.

As the report outlines, the threat of terrorism is pervasive and evolving. But in the same way the global coalition brought so many of us together against a common enemy in Da'esh, we must remain united to meet these new threats. This is a global threat and it will require global action.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the convening of today's meeting and thank Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov, Head of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, for his comprehensive briefing. We wish to express our support for him and our willingness to work with him in a coordinated manner.

Our experience in the fight against terrorism leads us to highlight the need to unflaggingly confront it in all the many and changing areas in which it operates. We therefore welcome the fact that the Organization is being proactive in its response to terrorism. Its efforts includes the recent establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the renewal of the mandate of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate, as well as the sixth biennial review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the summit of heads of counter-terrorism agencies convened by the Secretary-General.

Peru therefore welcomes the significant progress noted in the most recent report on the implementation of resolution 2368 (2017) on combating the so-called Islamic State and its affiliated organizations (S/2018/80). With the support of the Organization and the Security Council, the international community has succeeded in liberating the greater part of the territory that they had come to control.

However, the threat remains latent, as Da'esh changes its tactics or makes them more sophisticated so as to further undermine international peace and security. It is necessary to act intelligently and strengthen international cooperation in order to prevent and respond effectively to its new forms and manifestations. I shall discuss to three specific points.

First is the challenge posed by the return of foreign terrorist fighters to their countries of origin and/or their relocation to third countries. We consider it urgent to identify those terrorists. We are relying on the Da'esh and Al-Qaida sanctions list for that, but we need to make greater use of biometric information through INTERPOL and such instruments as advance passenger information systems and Passenger Name Record data gathered by the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Comprehensive strategies must also be devised to investigate, prosecute and punish such terrorists, with full respect for the rule of law and human rights. In that regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's efforts to operationalize the Investigative Team for the crimes committed by Da'esh in Iraq. Accordingly, we underscore the need to incorporate a gender perspective to support women victims and promote the integration of young people so as to draw them away from the path of violent extremism.

Secondly, as the relationship between terrorism, transnational organized crime and the misuse of cyberspace becomes increasingly tangible, the networks established by Da'esh to finance its activities reflect a worrying reality. It is essential to deepen our knowledge and cooperation with respect to a dynamic that includes networks of illicit trafficking in people, arms, natural resources, drugs and cultural property, as well as various money-laundering schemes. The use of information and communication technologies, in particular the Internet, by terrorist groups is also a matter of concern. As it loses physical space, Da'esh has maintained its presence in virtual space, particularly in social networks. That allows them not only to coordinate attacks but also to raise funds and attract supporters.

Thirdly, the need to address the root causes of violent extremism leading to terrorism is undoubtedly an issue that exceeds the remit of the Security Council. However, we believe it is important to recall, in line with the concept of sustainable peace, that peace and security, development and human rights are mutually reinforcing and vital for the implementation of an effective and integrated approach to counter-terrorism. The Secretary-General has reminded us in an important speech in London that in the face of obscurantism we must build a new age of enlightenment. In that connection, we welcome initiatives to combat terrorist narratives and promote peaceful and inclusive societies capable of preventing violent extremism. We believe, based on our own experience in the fight against terrorism, that greater participation by women and young people in public life is key to confronting and preventing this scourge.

Mrs. Gregoire Van Haaren (Netherlands): The Kingdom of the Netherlands thanks the Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General Voronkov for their leadership. We would also like to thank their staff, as well as the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and the Monitoring Team for their work in composing the most recent report on the threat posed by Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) (S/2018/80).

As was pointed out by other Council members before me, the report indicates that the threat posed by ISIS and its affiliates remains real. The women, men and children around the world who have fallen victim to atrocious acts by ISIS are a sad reminder of that. I would like to focus on three important elements: the threat, accountability, and additional action.

First, the threat. Although Raqqa has been liberated and ISIS has lost territories in Iraq and Syria, the myth of ISIS has not been unraveled. Less territory does not necessarily mean more security, and in countries such as Yemen, Egypt and Mali, the threat posed by ISIS remains high, as pointed out in the report. And in Afghanistan, ISIS affiliates continue to commit attacks.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is concerned about the increasing number of foreign terrorist fighters, and their families, returning from Syria and Iraq and those relocating to other conflict zones. As Mr. Voronkov

has just mentioned, through adaptation to a global network of motivated individuals, ISIS remains threat to all of us. That is why we must increase our efforts to prosecute and detain foreign terrorist fighters.

However, we can stop terrorists only if we spot terrorists. In December, the Council adopted resolution 2396 (2017), on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters. One of the key elements of the resolution is the obligation to collect passenger name records to enhance the detection of foreign terrorist fighters. We encourage Member States to make a top priority of developing the capability for that approach, and we encourage the United Nations to provide assistance where needed.

Enhancing detection of terrorists enhances prosecution of terrorists, which brings me to my second point, that is, accountability. For those men and women who commit terrorist acts, our message is clear: accountability is neither optional nor negotiable, and all victims deserve justice. To that end, we support the ongoing work and objectives of the International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism for Syria, as established by the General Assembly.

With regard to Iraq, resolution 2379 (2017) requests the formation of an investigative team to support domestic efforts to hold ISIS fighters accountable for their actions. We call for the swift establishment of the terms of reference of that team, and we underline that domestic efforts should be pursued in accordance with international law and United Nations best practices. We continue to call on both countries to become party to the Rome Statute or accept the exercise of jurisdiction by the International Criminal Court.

Let me turn to my third and final point: additional action by the United Nations and its Member States. It is essential that countries lacking the necessary capacities to implement resolutions receive technical assistance. Their security is our security. CTED plays a crucial role in the assessment and analysis of such needs. The Kingdom of the Netherlands welcomes the role that Under-Secretary-General Voronkov and his Office play in the subsequent coordination of capacity-building.

Prevention is key in the work of all United Nations entities involved. Member States should be provided the tools to create an environment that balances repressive and preventive counter-terrorism measures. To make our fight against terrorism and violent extremism sustainable, we must better understand root causes and involve local communities in addressing them.

In conclusion, we welcome the progress made in the fight against ISIS and compliment the United Nations on its valuable contribution to that end. However, we have a long road ahead of us in order to further diminish the threat and achieve full accountability.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands will continue to do its share, including as an active member of the Global Coalition and as a strong supporter of the United Nations.

Mr. Alemu (Ethiopia): I should like to express appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Voronkov for his briefing on the sixth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2018/80). We found the report very comprehensive and informative. We also thank the Secretary-General for making counter-terrorism one of his highest priorities. This is indeed very appropriate, and we wish to urge the Secretary-General never to relent and continue to prioritize counter-terrorism, more so now than ever because the temptation might be too great to lessen the focus on efforts to address the challenge.

The analysis of the threat contained in the report indicates that military pressure has resulted in strategic setbacks for ISIL in the main battleground. As a result, ISIL has lost its focus on conquering and holding territory, and its global propaganda machinery continues to deteriorate. Its revenues have fallen considerably since 2015, and new recruitment and travel of foreign terrorist fighters have now diminished. All this is very much welcomed, and the matter has been underlined by Under-Secretary-General Voronkov. We believe, nonetheless, that it is only wise not to go overboard and declare victory over terrorism. Under-Secretary-General Voronkov is right in saying that complacency should be avoided.

In this regard, what should be of serious concern is the fact that ISIL and affiliated groups continue to inspire a range of attacks outside the conflict zone. Foreign terrorist fighters, ISIL membe s and sympathizers are still able to use social media, including encryption technology and communication tools within the Dark Web, to communicate and coordinate and facilitate attacks. Of particular concern is the willingness of

some members of the ISIL and Al-Qaida networks to support each other.

Returnees and fighters relocated from conflict zones to other regions now present a considerable threat to international security. All of this shows that although notable progress has been made in defeating ISIL on the battlefield, significant challenges remain to counter the threats that persist, all of which require the proper implementation of United Nations resolutions and, more importantly, collaboration and cooperation at all levels among States and non-State entities.

We note from the report the ever-growing threat posed by ISIL, foreign terrorist fighters and sympathizers in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, Central and South Asia and South-East Asia. In that context, the response by States Members of the United Nations and other stakeholders in the areas of countering the financing of terrorism; law enforcement and judicial cooperation; the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers; prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration; managing the spread of violent extremism in prisons; and countering terrorist narratives are all very important.

Africa remains highly affected by terrorism and violent extremism. In fact, according to the African Union, 2017 witnessed devastating terrorist attacks in different parts of Africa. We are seeing what is happening in North and West Africa, the Sahel region and East Africa, where ISIL and Al-Qaida affiliates and sympathizers continue to pose serious threats to peace and security.

With regard to East Africa, Al-Qaida-affiliated Al-Shabaab remains an important threat to peace and security in Somalia, in the Horn. But we are also seeing the emergence of ISIL affiliates operating in Somalia that are controlled and directed from the central command in Puntland, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General. ISIL continues to recruit through facilitators based in Libya, Europe and Somalia. There are also interesting reports by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development that reinforce these findings and provide useful insights.

Although ISIL in Libya is said to have been weakened after losing a significant portion of the territory it controlled, its threat persists in the country and the wider region. More concerning is the fact that other ISIL affiliates in Africa are reported to have sent fighters to Libya to support and gain cooperation from ISIL cells located in the country, as well as the potential movement of Boko Haram members to other States of the region across Libya's western and south-eastern borders, all of which require that greater attention be paid to the situation in Libya.

In West Africa, Boko Haram and ISIL are active, and the threat posed by ISIL-related groups and Al-Qaida affiliates continues to spread into the States of the region. Restoring peace and stability in Libya, Mali and the Lake Chad basin is indeed critical to deny ISIL and other terrorist groups safe haven. That is why enhancing the capacities of the countries of the region, the Group of Five for the Sahel and Lake Chad, continue to be very important in countering ISIL and its affiliates operating in the wider region. That is also why it is so critical that we get the management of security in Somalia right as we embark on the transition from the African Union Mission in Somalia to the Somalia security forces.

The enormous challenge we face in the fight against terrorism should compel us to forge meaningful cooperation at all levels. The full implementation of existing international legal frameworks against ISIL and foreign terrorist fighters by all Member States is vital to strengthening international cooperation. However, developing countries will continue to face huge difficulties in properly implementing those legal frameworks because of limitations in various areas related to capacity. Any shortcomings that might be observed are not, by and large, the result of a lack of commitment, but are due to a lack of the resources required and of technical and other related capacities — too many to list here.

Therefore, in addition to forging the necessary bilateral, regional and international cooperation, the delivery of capacity-building and technical assistance will be critical for the effective implementation of those legal frameworks. We also agree on the need for enhanced coordination between the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate as well as among all relevant Security Council- and General Assembly-mandated bodies in their efforts in support of Member States in countering the threats posed by terrorism and violent extremism.

But, and this is what I wish to underline before I conclude, it is our view that there is still a lack of the necessary level of cooperation and coordination,

commensurate with the magnitude of the challenge we face in this area, among States that are in a position to make a huge difference in this fight, which we continue to believe should continue to be regarded as of the highest priority for us all.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov for his informative briefing. The fact that we now have a dedicated Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism to brief us on such matters and to help us to move forward on the all-of-UN approach to counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism is very welcome. In addition to the Office of Counter-Terrorism, the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), as well as the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, are key partners in that work.

As we heard from Mr. Voronkov this morning, the list of countries recently struck by terrorist attacks is long. Despite the strategic setbacks in Syria and Iraq, thanks to the resolve of the global coalition, to which we proudly belong, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) remains a serious threat to international peace and security. The ongoing transformation of the group from having territorial ambitions to a networked global organization, with less control over its affiliates, is a clear trend. That will present new challenges to combating its activities. At the same time, the organization remains locally embedded in a number of protracted conflicts, for example, in Afghanistan and Libya, as we have heard this morning.

Adapting to the changing nature of the threat from ISIL will be essential if we are to respond successfully. The Security Council has been proactive in that regard by adopting last year a significant number of resolutions with a bearing on counter-terrorism, including resolution 2396 (2017), on foreign terrorist fighters. However, as Under-Secretary-General Voronkov stressed, in order to have the desired effect, such resolutions must be fully implemented. In that regard, we welcome the support being provided by the United Nations to Member States, particularly in relation to capacity-building.

The fight against terrorism is integral to the Security Council delivering on its responsibility to maintain international peace and security. The link between terrorism and conflict is clear. Of the 22 countries most impacted by terrorism in 2016, all were defined as being in conflict. In addition, it is worth recalling that since the year 2000, 99 per cent of deaths resulting from terrorism have taken place in countries either in conflict or with a high level of political instability. Efforts to combat terrorism cannot therefore be viewed in isolation but must be seen within the broader context. Fully implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the sustaining peace agenda should be seen as a core part of our efforts.

Preventing violent extremism remains critically important and must be viewed as a long-term endeavour. For instance, as underlined in the report (S/2017/1125), it is essential to manage the spread of violent extremism in prisons. Sweden has worked on that issue both at home and abroad, including in Somalia, where staff from the Swedish Prison and Probation Services have been seconded to support the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and the Somali prison authorities in reintegrating convicted Al-Shabaab prisoners and in reducing the likelihood of them returning to violent extremism after release.

I thank the Under-Secretary-General for his ongoing and unwavering commitment to the important prevention of violent extremism agenda, in line with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. It is essential that relevant agencies and organs, including the Security Council, pay increased attention to the need to prevent violent extremism.

There are three more concrete issues that I would like to address regarding our response to the terrorist threat.

First, on accountability, we must hold perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of terrorism to account. In doing so, it is of course important that the prosecution of suspected terrorists be carried out with full respect for human rights and the rule of law. We look forward to an agreement as soon as possible on the terms of reference for the investigative team for Da'esh crimes in Iraq, consistent with the United Nations procedures for sharing evidence. The prosecution of terrorism-related offences and war crimes in Swedish courts is increasing. We were among the first countries to prosecute suspected perpetrators of war crimes in Iraq and Syria, based on the principle of universal jurisdiction. Last year, an individual was also sentenced

to prison for using social media to provoke members of the public to commit a terrorist offence.

That incident underlines how the use of information and communications technology and social media by terrorists is a great concern. We can, and must, deal with that phenomenon very seriously but without impinging on respect for human rights or on the rule of law. That is the challenge before us: protecting our citizens while simultaneously safeguarding global connectivity and the open, free and secure flow of information. The same rights that people have offline must also be protected online, including the freedom of expression.

Secondly, special attention is needed with regard to the gender dimension in counter-terrorism. Women play multiple roles in relation to terrorism, including those of perpetrator, supporter, facilitator, victim and preventer. In a recent study of 15 countries, the Women's Alliance for Security Leadership concluded that women's rights groups were often the first to warn about the signs of increasing violent extremism. We welcome the attention paid to that issue in the Secretary-General's report.

We also note with satisfaction that, in the wake of resolution 2395 (2017), we are already seeing the issue of children and the rights of the child increasingly reflected in the work of CTED and in the Secretary-General's report.

Finally, looking forward, we welcome the Secretary-General's decision to hold a meeting of the heads of Member State counter-terrorism agencies in June. The transnational nature of many terrorist activities makes the prevention of terrorist acts by any one country alone more difficult. My Ethiopian colleague just mentioned that. The meeting will therefore be an important opportunity for our respective operational agencies to meet. Let me also underline the importance that we attach to the review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which is set to take place in June. We hope that the negotiations will be productive and will result in strengthened cooperation.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): We thank the Kuwaiti presidency for holding this most timely meeting. We express our gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov for his informative briefing.

Despite the military pressure and the successful anti-terrorist operations of the international coalition against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Syria and Iraq, which have recovered vast territories held by the terrorist organization, the activities of Da'esh are still a major global threat. That is further aggravated by the return of foreign terrorist fighters to their countries of origin, who, under the instruction of their instigators in Syria and Afghanistan, commit terrorist acts and create satellite networks. The ideologists of terrorism actively seek safe havens, potential recruits and religious radicals to conduct heinous acts directly on the territory of their States.

At the same time, we see a change in the tactics, forms and methods of actions by ISIL, who, under the new and changed conditions, are conducting terrorist attacks outside the conflict zones, with deliberate attempts to expand and strengthen the network of cells. Those cells operate undetected, with a certain degree of autonomy, thereby making it difficult for Member States to identify them. It is therefore most critical to establish an effective mechanism for the exchange of information, at the international level, on foreign terrorist fighters, returnees and those who relocate.

The transfer of terrorist threats to other regions and the Security Council measures to counter them were therefore among the key topics on the agenda of the visits by the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999), concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities, to Malaysia and Singapore in August 2017 and to Afghanistan in October 2017.

Notwithstanding the many measures taken by the international community to identify and block extremist Internet resources, the fighters and supporters of Da'esh continue to use the Internet and social networks, including th Dark Web encryption technology and communication tools, to disseminate, coordinate and conduct terrorist attacks and to promote their narratives. A stricter, well-coordinated regulation of the use of the Internet is therefore needed to identify and to prevent the spread of terrorist content. Complacency is harmful to our collective efforts to contain the spread of Da'esh propaganda via the Internet.

While the revenue of ISIL has decreased by 90 per cent compared to 2015, the group nevertheless continues to profit from the illegal sale of oil. Kazakhstan therefore recommends further comprehensive measures to block channels for the illegal transportation of hydrocarbons.

We note with satisfaction the special attention paid by the Secretary-General to Afghanistan. Kazakhstan is concerned about the emergence of terrorist groups, particularly ISIL, in the north of the country, which can pose a security threat to the States of Central Asia and beyond. We strongly condemn the recent terrorist attacks in Kabul and Jalalabad. Kazakhstan fully shares and supports the Secretary-General's vision, priorities and efforts to reform the United Nations in order to prioritize its preventive agenda. That was the reason behind our initiative in organizing the Security Council's visit to Kabul last month. We wanted to enable Council members to get first-hand information on the current situation and consider the preventive measures needed to address the root causes of these issues, in particular, as Kazakhstan has proposed, by linking the achievement of peace and security with sustainable development, through regional partnerships with all of Afghanistan's neighbours and the establishment of effective collaboration with United Nations agencies on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Kazakhstan has intensified its interaction with the relevant authorities of the other States of Central Asia in order to implement the Joint Plan of Action for implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia. The Action Plan has also been incorporated into the framework of the the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's regional anti-terrorist structure and the Anti-Terrorism Centre of the Commonwealth of Independent States. We support Mr. Voronkov's proposal for a summit of heads of intelligence organizations and hope it will be a step in the right direction for countering terrorism. We have achieved real results in pursuing and detaining people involved in terrorist activities. In 2017 alone, in cooperation with the special services of Russia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, more than 40 persons implicated in terrorist and extremist activities, were found, detained and handed over to partners in the region. Working together with the border agencies of our neighbouring countries, we have exchanged information on the issues of terrorist and extremist threats and their impact on border security. As a result of measures taken in 2017, more than 20 people have been detained for involvement in terrorist and extremist activities.

Kazakhstan attaches special importance to implementing resolution 2368 (2017) at the national level. In accordance with the resolution and our national legislation on counteracting money-laundering in order to combat illicit trafficking and terrorism financing, we have frozen terrorists' assets in our country, in compliance with the list of organizations and individuals related to the financing of terrorism and extremism. The travel ban included in the Security Council Sanctions Committees' lists is policed and monitored by INTERPOL through search registries of regional counter-terrorist structures and Kazakhstan's relevant ministries. We work diligently to confiscate weapons, ammunition and explosives from terrorists' accomplices in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of radicals.

Kazakhstan is implementing large-scale measures to neutralize potential risks by strengthening its national security and thereby preventing extremism and terrorism in any form. We have updated our legislative standards on migration and on arms circulation and security and toughened our criminal penal code for terrorist and extremist activities. Taking into account the recommendations of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Security Council's relevant decisions and resolutions, including resolution 2368 (2017), as well as other countries' positive experiences, we have drafted a State programme for countering religious extremism and terrorism in Kazakhstan for the period from 2018 to 2022 that is currently awaiting approval. The programme envisages measures for actively involving the non-governmental sector in the prevention of religious extremism and terrorism.

In conclusion, I would like to assure the Council of Kazakhstan's full commitment to countering international terrorism as part of broader multilateral efforts. In that regard, I would like to point out that recently, with the participation of more than 100 Member States, Kazakhstan launched a code of conduct for achieving a terrorism-free world, and we hope to cooperate actively through that initiative in order to streamline our collective efforts to combat terrorism internationally, since coordination and collaboration are still lacking.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov for his briefing, and the Secretary-General for his report (S/2018/80) on the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of

United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering that threat.

There have been terrorist attacks recently in Afghanistan, Iraq and Egypt, among other places, that have resulted in enormous casualties. As humankind's shared enemy, terrorism has ramifications that extend beyond national borders and that countries cannot deal with single-handedly. The international community should work to effectively implement the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 2253 (2015) and 2368 (2017) and join in combating the evolving threat of terrorism in line with its new trends and features.

First, we must forge an international consensus against terrorism, which poses a threat to the whole of humankind. The international community should support a unified standard and take a zero-tolerance and non-discriminatory approach in implementing a firm crackdown. The world's counter-terrorism efforts should respect the sovereignty of the countries affected and their ownership in the fight against terrorism, adhere to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and make full use of the leading role of the United Nations and its Security Council.

Secondly, we should eliminate terrorism's breeding grounds. Terrorism grows out of wars, conflict, ethnic hatred, poverty and backwardness. The international community should be committed to helping Member States to reduce and eradicate poverty, increase efforts to reach political solutions to regional issues, promote the concept of inclusive, equitable and balanced development, foster dialogue and equal and peaceful relations between different civilizations and regions, and resist linking terrorism to specific ethnicities or religions.

Thirdly, we should work to break up terrorists' transboundary networks. Terrorist organizations have recently sustained major defeats in Iraq, Syria and the southern Philippines, but the international movements and return of terrorist fighters still pose a serious threat to countries of origin, transit and destination and their security and stability. The countries concerned should strengthen their border controls and cooperation in law enforcement, share intelligence, improve their capacity-building and curb terrorist fighters' movements.

Fourthly, we should crack down on terrorist organizations' use of the Internet in order to engage in terrorist activities. The Internet and social media are increasingly becoming the means by which terrorist organizations incite and recruit fighters and plot attacks. The international community should work to create synergies aimed at eliminating the channels used to propagate extremist ideas though social media, strengthen the regulation of cyberspace and prevent terrorist organizations from using the Internet for propaganda and financing activities.

In the past few years, China has engaged intensively with multilateral cooperation mechanisms that include the United Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, and has made significant contributions to the international fight against terrorism. China supports the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, among others, in their efforts to strengthen their cooperation with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism. We will continue to join and promote multilateral and bilateral cooperation against terrorism and provide assistance to developing countries, including materials for countering terrorism and building capacity, to the best of our ability. China is ready to join all countries of the world in a concerted response to terrorism and violent extremism in order to maintain world peace and tranquility.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would first like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's briefing. We are pleased to welcome Mr. Voronkov, who is now directing the work of preparing the Secretary-General's strategic reports on the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

We studied the report presented today (S/2018/80) with interest. Its conclusions about the military and material suppression of the group's core in Syria and Iraq inspire cautious optimism. With regard to the regional aspects of this threat, we are still concerned about the increasing strength of ISIL's outpost in northern Afghanistan. We must not underestimate the potential of the international terrorist adherents who are gathering there. As the report says, Central Asia is also under threat, and natives of that region have already been observed in terrorist attacks in Turkey, Russia, European countries and the United States.

We concur that the volume of money and other material resources entering ISIL's coffers has significantly decreased. That does not mean, however, that reports should consider the issue of ISIL's financial and material support a lower priority. As a result of successful operations of the Syrian armed forces, the support of Russia's Aerospace Forces, ISIL fighters have lost access to critical oilfields as well as transportation and sales routes. According to our data, towards the end of 2017 ISIL's income from illicit oil and gas trading was not more than $2 million a month, while its total revenues in the Middle East had fallen to $3 million.

Given the situation, ISIL has actively sought new sources of support, honing its skills in the use of modern technologies. For example, in one of Syria's neighbours, terrorists' henchmen are swindling ordinary civilians by setting up fake Internet shops, while the caliphate's fighters are not above making money from online casinos. As the Secretary-General's report rightly notes, ISIL's adherents are proactively using couriers and the hawala system to transfer funds. Besides that, these criminal proceeds are being deposited increasingly often in accounts at reputable banks in countries in the Persian Gulf, Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia, and Russia recently provided detailed information on this issue to the Financial Action Task Force. When we discussed the Secretary-General's previous report (S/2017/467), many delegations drew attention to ISIL's attempts to invest in legitimate businesses abroad. But it also turns out that some Western companies themselves are not averse to doing business with terrorists. We believe that such issues deserve the close scrutiny of the authorities of the countries concerned.

Today more than ever before the issue of subjecting terrorists to criminal prosecution is an urgent one. In accordance with key Council resolutions, anyone who provides direct or indirect assistance to ISIL, not to mention the fighters themselves, should be held accountable. We witnessed yet another failure to abide by that obligation in early January, when the authorities in Syrian Kurdistan made a unilateral decision to pardon some 400 former members of ISIL, including field commanders and caliphate officials, 120 of whom ended up the ranks of the Syrian Democratic Forces. The fact that events such as these can still go virtually unnoticed testifies to the double standards that persist with respect to terrorists.

Unfortunately, resolutions 2253 (2015) and 2368 (2017) are not being fully implemented, particularly where observance of the arms embargo regime is concerned, something that is well confirmed in open information sources. We trust that those issues will be taken into account when the Secretary-General's seventh report on ISIL is being drafted. Furthermore, with regard to consideration of the situation on the ground and current trends in the fight against ISIL, we would like to draw attention to the consolidated assessment of future terrorist threats prepared for the annual meeting, held in Russia, of heads of special services, security agencies and law-enforcement organizations. The next edition will be published shortly as an official document of both the Council and the General Assembly.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful for the briefing by the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov and for the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/80).

The settings in which terrorism operates today have transcended local and regional dimensions to become a global problem. The threat of terrorism and violent extremism is one of the largest, most complex and constantly evolving challenges facing the international community, particularly because terrorist groups and organizations have developed their capacities for financing their activities and recruiting people remotely by various means and with different narratives. This evolving threat now has a diverse group of recruits, especially notable for the large numbers of women and young people of diverse ages, social groups, educational profiles, professions and countries, to which we must add the growing phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, who continue to represent a particular threat to international peace and security. In that regard, we want to highlight the work of the new United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, which has been collaborating with various Member States to combat terrorism and prevent violent extremism. We believe that its efforts to combat terrorism and promote the capacity-building of Member States should continue.

We should also be aware that terrorist organizations and groups are using the new communication technologies and the Internet, as well as social networks, as platforms for spreading their radical ideology and disinformation in order to recruit fighters and become

a global threat. According to the Office of Counter-Terrorism, at least 40,000 foreign terrorist fighters from more than 110 countries may have travelled to join terrorist groups in the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq. According to the Office's study *Enhancing the Understanding of the Foreign Terrorist Fighters Phenomenon in Syria*, the most influential factors in attracting foreign terrorist fighters may be related to the socioeconomic situation, including promises of material and personal benefits, and ideological or religious claims. Nevertheless, we should insist that terrorism cannot and must not be linked to any particular religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. Such characteristics should not be used to justify measures to combat or prevent terrorism, in accordance with resolution 2354 (2017) on narratives to combat terrorism.

While the threat from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) is still there, it has lessened, and the situation today differs from that in previous months, thanks to the ongoing defeats that ISIL has suffered in Iraq and Syria. According to the twentieth report (S/2017/573) of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pursuant to resolution 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities, submitted in August 2017, the number of fighters returning to their countries of origin or moving from conflict zones to other countries may be increasing. We are concerned that in the short- or medium-term this situation could produce a kind of reorganization or emergence of new terrorist groups in third countries with weak governance or in regions dealing with political and institutional instability. To that end, coordination between the various committees and subsidiary organs of the Council with the Office of Counter-Terrorism is crucial to preventing the spread of this threat to other parts of the world.

We believe that the various initiatives of Governments and agencies, along with the relevant Council resolutions, aimed at freezing assets linked to financial transactions related to economic resources and income-generating activities that benefit individuals, groups, companies and entities included on the list of sanctions against ISIL and Al-Qaida, are important measures in the quest to put an end to this human scourge. We should also point out that they often obtain assets through money-laundering and so-called tax havens, where regulations are reduced or non-existent, especially when it comes to investment in the tertiary sector. In that regard, we believe that it is the lack of adequate mechanisms for exchanging information that is hampering countries' efforts to address this threat. The international community should therefore focus its efforts on encouraging a fluid and effective exchange of information about such individuals both between States and international organizations such as INTERPOL, as well as through judicial cooperation and exchange of information.

We also believe that there is a pressing need to implement programmes with a comprehensive approach to gender and children's issues in order to fight against terrorism and to counter foreign terrorist fighters who are returning to or travelling to other countries. In that regard, part of the challenge will be to implement clear and targeted rules that enable us to deal with minors who return to their countries of origin, as well as rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives based on inter-institutional and multidisciplinary models.

In conclusion, many speakers in this Chamber have indicated that it is important to tackle the structural causes of the rise of terrorism and in particular of groups such as Da'esh. Those causes unquestionably include the imposition of regime-change policies, interventionism and interference in the internal affairs of other States. The situations in Iraq and Libya are clear testimony to the fact that such actions and policies are causes of terrorism.

Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism for presenting the sixth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by Da'esh to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering that threat (S/2018/80). The report underscores the continuing terrorist threat and calls on the Security Council and all Member States to exercise constant vigilance and to strengthen and fully implement the relevant United Nations resolutions in order to combat this scourge.

The problem of terrorism, which exists among most of the peoples of the States Members of our Organization, continues to be a difficult challenge for States, despite the crushing defeats recently endured by Al-Qaida and Da'esh in Iraq, Syria and the Philippines. With more than 30,000 foreign terrorist fighters from more than 100 States, Da'esh has posed one of the biggest

threats that the international community has faced in recent years, as the report emphasizes. Through its adoption in September 2014 of resolution 2178 (2014), in the presence of Heads of State and Government, the Security Council showed its determination to tackle this scourge. Côte d'Ivoire would like to commend the multifaceted efforts undertaken by the United Nations and the international community to strengthen our ability to combat this evil, which undermines the development efforts of many States and affects the lives of thousands of people.

Côte d'Ivoire applauds the reforms undertaken to restructure and improve the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture, including the establishment, at the initiative of the Secretary-General, of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, whose mission is to breathe new life into the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. In the same vein, my delegation welcomes the adoption of resolution 2354 (2017), based on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and accompanied by guidelines and good practices. Adherence to these principles and practices should enable States to effectively combat the ways that Da'esh and Al-Qaida incite and lead people to commit acts of terrorism.

We also welcomed the Council's adoption in December 2017 of resolution 2395 (2017), renewing the mandate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), which remains a linchpin in the counter-terrorism architecture, for a further four-year period, until December 2021. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the new Executive Director of CTED, Ms. Michèle Coninsx, and to assure her of the determination of the Côte d'Ivoire authorities to collaborate with her Committee in order to enable it to fulfil its assigned tasks. We look forward to her forthcoming visit to Côte d'Ivoire in March and assure her of our readiness to work for her mission's success.

The fight against Da'esh and its associated groups appears to be a long-term endeavour, owing to these criminal groups' new ways of operating. In this respect, my delegation stresses the need for all Member States to work for the common goal of strengthening regional and international cooperation mechanisms. We also urge CTED to support States in formulating national legislation that translates into concrete measures that will enable them to fully implement their obligations under the relevant United Nations resolutions.

We call on the Security Council to give special attention to the most sensitive regions, specifically the West African region, which has been plagued by the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon and by violent extremism. Côte d'Ivoire would like to once again urge the Security Council to support the initiatives of the countries of the Group of Five for the Sahel and the efforts of the Lake Chad countries. We also call for solidarity among States in helping to build the capacities of less affluent countries to deal with the evolving challenges presented by this ongoing threat.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to recall the responsibility incumbent on us all to cooperate at the regional and international levels in the fight against Da'esh and its associated groups. For its part, Côte d'Ivoire is determined to work with all bilateral and multilateral partners to counter this scourge, in particular in West Africa and the Sahel. To that end, I would like to announce that beginning in July, my country will host a regional counter-terrorism school, with the assistance of France. The school will be used to train army officials, and members of special forces involved in the fight against terrorism in particular.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is with great pleasure that, on behalf of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, I take the floor at this meeting on the presentation of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/80) on the threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts. I would like to begin my statement by expressing our deepest condolences to, and solidarity with, the countries that have become victims of terrorist acts and all those who have lost loved ones as victims of terrorist attacks, among them our own country. We would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov, Head of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, for the substantive and strategic briefing he has just delivered on strengthening coordination and coherence in the efforts of the United Nations.

This is the first time that the Republic of Equatorial Guinea is participating in this very important biannual meeting. Like all the other Member States represented in the Chamber, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea believes that the problem of terrorism is fundamental and requires special attention. To that end, we recall the Millennium Declaration, which emphasizes peace and security for the peoples of the world, and in particular notes the need to adopt effective measures against international terrorism, given that criminal

acts driven by political reasons, designed or planned to provoke a state of global terror over the population in general, a group of people or particular persons, are unjustifiable under all circumstances, whatever the political, philosophical, ideological, racial, religious or ethnic nature may be, or any other reason used to justify them. The fight against terrorism therefore must always remain a global priority.

It is very encouraging that there are both international cooperation and military pressure currently being applied in the context of several groups of international terrorists, such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)/Da'esh, Al-Qaida, the Taliban and other terrorist groups, such as Boko Haram and Al-Shabab. Such collaboration and pressure are reducing the expansion and ability of those terrorist organizations to continue to conquer and control territories.

Although according to the report that has just been presented to us Da'esh still has the capacity to continue perpetrating attacks internally in some of the countries where it is present, the international community's effort has managed to significantly limit its presence in urban areas, its financial capacity, its ability to take over and hold territorry, its mobility and its ability to recruit and train new members. The new phase that the report describes, which has been achieved through many sacrifices that have ultimately increased the number of strategic military setbacks for Da'esh in most of the world's regions, presents another type of threat insofar as Da'esh cells are becoming more autonomous.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea recognizes the efforts of the Secretary-General and the United Nations in reforming and strengthening the architecture of the United Nations to tackle the serious threat of terrorism. In that regard, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea joins the call of the Secretary-General, and of all the other Member States present in the Chamber, for the implementation of Security Council resolutions — including resolutions 1373 (2001), 1267 (1999), 2395 (2017) and 2396 (2017). In that regard, we appreciate the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate in updating the Technical Guide to the Implementation of Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005), 2178 (2014) and other relevant Council resolutions and decisions to bolster the efforts of Member States to counter a broad range of terrorist threats.

The existence of new and innovative global strategies and initiatives to combat terrorism, together with the implementation of the resolutions I mentioned, are the essential instruments to combat terrorism from all possible angles — the financial aspect; international cooperation in the area of law enforcement; the prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of foreign terrorist fighters returning to their countries or relocating to third countries; the prevention and eradication of the spread of violent extremism in prisons and through digital technology; and the protection of the human rights of all those affected by terrorism, especially children, refugees, migrants and asylum seekers.

Despite the various initiatives and the advances made, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea remains quite concerned about the chain of threats posed by terrorism and other groups associated with it, since many Member States and subregions lack the tools to face those threats, namely, a system of biometric data — fingerprints, photographs and facial recognition technology, as well as other means or relevant instruments for gathering such information. That creates blind spots in areas such as protecting porous marine and terrestrial borders in many regions, such as in Central Africa. As called for in the report, it is extremely crucial to prevent contact and/or collaboration among the various existing terrorist groups. For that reason, collaboration, cooperation, training and the transfer of advanced technology are critical to effectively fight terrorists.

Another significant threat to national and international peace and security is the return of foreign fighters to their countries of origin, which could have very serious consequences, such as the organization and/or reorganization of terrorist cells or the radicalization of vulnerable people and those susceptible to terrorist propaganda. Preventing the movement of foreign fighters is both essential and very difficult. As the report also notes, in some Member States judicial institutions do not laws available to prosecute their nationals who had once travelled abroad to fight for Da'esh or some other terrorist group, or they are unable to prosecute due to a lack of evidence and collaboration among different sectors. In that regard, we encourage Member States to support relevant efforts to ensure the implementation of the plan for capacity-building for countering the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, in accordance with resolution 2396 (2017).

Terrorism does not recognize borders nor nationalities, nor does it distinguish between religions, the rich or the poor. The fight against terrorism therefore requires greater cooperation. Only through a collective and shared effort and commitment among Member States, in collaboration with public-private alliances, non-governmental organizations and other groups, can we sustain the progress made against terrorism, including against groups such as Da'esh and their ilk, and arrive at lasting solutions.

The African continent is being bled dry at the hands of the crimes committed by terrorist groups, such as Boko Haram in north-east Nigeria, which is also affecting its neighbouring countries of the Niger, Chad and Cameroon — also neighbouring countries of Equatorial Guinea. There is also the case of Al-Shabaab in the East of the continent. Countries such as Mali are falling victim to groups supported by Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb. All those phenomenoa lead to enormous damage and serious challenges to the life and economies of the countries most directly affected and, to a lesser extent, to their neighbours, and, by extension, to all of Africa.

Because terrorism results in internally displaced persons, damage to infrastructure and the tourism sector and harm that is difficult to quantify with accuracy, combating it is vital to our survival as States. As the Council knows, there was a recent attempted terrorist attack in our country, whose aim was to violate and undermine its independence and stability and destroy its legitimate institutions. Fortunately, it was quickly neutralized by our national security forces, with the cooperation and support of the sisterly Republic of Cameroon. That example demonstrates that cooperation is necessary and beneficial in the area of security and in the fight against terrorism.

In recent years, Equatorial Guinea has meaningfully participated in multilateral counter-terrorism mechanisms, including through the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States and the Economic Community of West African States joint mechanism. Equatorial Guinea stands ready to continue to participate in and promote multilateral and bilateral cooperation in the fight against terrorism and to improve sharing of counter-terrorism information. A good example is Operation Obangame in the Gulf of Guinea, in which various States of the subregion, including Equatorial Guinea, fight to prevent piracy, which could be used by terrorists or potential terrorists. Equatorial Guinea is willing to work with all countries to provide a collective response to the threat of terrorism and violent extremism and to maintain international peace and stability.

Nonetheless, the situation requires more in-depth reflection. There is an increasing number of conflicts and victims. To ease the situation, the Security Council must continue to work with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, redouble its efforts to adopt policies that promote conflict-prevention and use all the instruments, mechanisms and methods established by the two organizations.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov for his briefing on the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/80) on the threat posed by Da'esh to international peace and security. Allow me to share a few thoughts.

As a result of coordinated combat operations, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has lost a significant part of the territory it once controlled. Although international coalition efforts have decreased ISIL's revenue, terrorist groups such as ISIL and its affiliates operating around the globe remain capable of conducting terrorist attacks. We look forward to this year's Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy review. We firmly believe that capacity-building and countering and preventing violent extremism should be given the highest priority.

Let me express my appreciation for the input of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. Their efforts to provide strategic level-reports that reflect the gravity of the threat are important. We welcome the fact that the recent report of the Monitoring Team emphasized threat assessment, information-sharing and the strengthening of cross-border monitoring of the movement of individuals. We reiterate the importance of strengthening wide-scale cooperation between the United Nations and the regional bodies of the Financial Action Task Force, bearing in mind the growing threat of new terrorist-financing technologies that make possible the anonymous acquisition of funds. We are fully aware that advances in technology mean that funds-gathering and recruitment by terrorists is a more complex challenge facing the international community. ISIL members and sympathizers can still use social media,

including encryption technology and communication tools in the Dark Web, to communicate, coordinate and facilitate attacks.

We cannot forget about the traditional methods of terrorism financing — which remain simple and effective and are popular among returning foreign terrorist fighters — such as the robberies that took place in Mosul and Al-Arish. Developing hypothetical trends with regard to terrorist financing and possible terrorist attacks should be a priority for Member States. We can today address only preventive measures when we face specific actions undertaken by terrorists. However, it seems that we are not adequately prepared to swiftly respond to the creativity of terrorists, whose methods continue to change. It is therefore critical to understand methods and trends in order to predict the potential financial trajectory and activities of terrorists.

Terrorism is a cross-border phenomenon. Therefore, the further strengthening of cooperation among the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations and States remains key for its effective eradication, in particular when addressing accountability. As a member of the international coalition, Poland is ready to cooperate closely with the United Nations in that area.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now give a statement in my national capacity.

We would like to express our thanks and appreciation to Mr. Vladimir Voronkov for his insightful briefing.

We take this opportunity to welcome the Secretary-General's reform by establishing the Office of Counter-Terrorism in June 2017. It is one of the initial steps taken by the Secretary-General to implement institutional reform. Our view is that the reform will to a great extent enhace the coordination of efforts and activities to counter terrorism in the framework of the United Nations and beyond, as well as to build the capacity of Member States to combat this looming threat. The United Nations and its agencies coordinate with international organizations in their significant efforts to counter terrorism. They take precautionary measures to eliminate the terrorist groups. Those efforts, combined with the efforts of the international coalition to eliminate terrorism, succeeded in defeating terrorist groups in some places. However, Member States face challenges in their efforts to counter terrorism because those groups have developed new ways and techniques. That requires the Security Council and the Member States to redouble their efforts, through dialogue, information- and experience-sharing. We must also implement the relevant Security Council resolutions and work with the Office of Counter-Terrorism, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the Analytical Support Group and other United Nations bodies, along with relevant international organizations.

Kuwait welcomes the Secretary-General's report (S/2018/80), including its evaluation and analysis of Da'esh, and the role of the international coalition to combat its proliferation. Member States have established control measures leading to the loss by Da'esh of its capabilities and financial resources. At the same time, the report underscores that Da'esh has the ability to adapt itself to new situations notwithstanding the scarcity of its resources, Da'esh is looking for new resources and creating terrorist groups and cells by using new methods. The report underscores the importance of international cooperation with the United Nations and its bodies to combat this scourge.

Terrorism persists and poses a threat to international peace and security. That is why Kuwait condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, regardless of its motivation. Terrorism is a criminal act and should not be linked to any religion, identity, culture or ethnicity.

Fighting terrorism requires mobilization of all international efforts in order to address this criminal scourge. Measures must be adopted to strengthen commitment to international humanitarian law, respect of human rights, good governance and peaceful coexistence among various religions. There should be respect for the symbols of religions and their holy places. Conditions leading to the proliferation of terrorism, hatred and all manifestations of extremism and violence should be addressed.

Moreover, we reiterate the importance of issues involving youth and women with respect to international peace and security within the context of terrorist acts. We must increase women's participation in the strategies pertaining to counter terrorism and violent extremism that leads to terrorism. On 13 February, and as part of the efforts that the State of Kuwait makes at the international level, we will host a ministerial meeting of the global coalition against Da'esh, with the participation of 70 countries and four international organizations. Its goal is to establish a strategy and guidelines for combating terrorism. The conference

will be the first such event since the defeat of Da'esh in Iraq.

In conclusion, we reiterate Kuwait's firm and absolute condemnation of acts of terrorism in all their forms and manifestations and regardless of their motivation, location and perpetrators. They constitute a deliberate threat to international peace and security and a blatant violation of international law. At the same time, we underscore the fact that strengthening the culture of tolerance and coexistence among peoples and nations is one of Kuwait's foreign policy priorities. We fully support all international efforts aimed at combating terrorism and stopping terrorist threats throughout the world.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations in order to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.